

# THE MOVEMENT OF CHILDREN FOR INTERNATIONAL ADOPTION: DEVELOPMENTS AND TRENDS IN RECEIVING STATES AND STATES OF ORIGIN 1998-2004

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**Abstract**

## Introduction

This paper explores the implications of developments in intercountry adoption worldwide in the early years of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, based on a demographic analysis of trends in numbers and rates in 20 receiving States between 1998 and 2004. The incidence of ICA in States of origin has been estimated using data from these 20 countries. The paper updates two earlier publications (Selman 2000 and 2002) and an unpublished paper presented last year at a conference in Copenhagen (Selman 2005).

## Receiving States

The analysis shows a marked increase in the global number of intercountry adoptions over the five years, with an estimated minimum of 45,000 officially recorded adoptions in the 20 States by 2004, which represents an increase of 42 per cent since 1998 with the greatest increase found in Spain and Ireland.

**Table 1: Percentage Change in Number of Adoptions 1998-2004; Selected Receiving States**

Country	Adoptions 1998	Adoptions 2001	Adoptions 2003	Adoptions 2004	% Change 1998- 2004
<b>Spain</b>	1,487	3,428	3,951	<b>5,541</b>	+ 273
<b>Ireland</b>	147	179	341	<b>398</b>	+ 171
<b>Netherlands</b>	825	1,122	1,154	<b>1,307</b>	+ 58.4
<b>Italy</b>	2,233	1,797	2,772	<b>3,398</b>	+ 52.2
<b>USA</b>	15,774	19,237	21,616	<b>22,884</b>	+ 45.1
<b>Sweden</b>	928	1,044	1,046	<b>1,109</b>	+ 19.5
<b>France</b>	3,777	3,094	3,995	<b>4,079</b>	+ 8.0
<b>Canada</b>	2,222	1,874	2,180	<b>1,955</b>	- 12.0
<b>TOTAL (20 countries )</b>	<b>31,667</b>	<b>36,068</b>	<b>41,229</b>	<b>44,860</b>	<b>+ 41.7</b>

Standardisation against population (crude adoption rate) or number of births (**adoption ratio**) indicates that in 2004 the receiving States with the highest "ratio" were **Norway (12.8** per 1,000 births); **Spain (12.4)** and **Sweden (11.7)**: the lowest was in the **UK (0.5)**. The rate or ratio would be even higher for Catalonia

alone. In 1977 the adoption ratio in Sweden had reached nearly 20.0 per 1,000 live births [Andersson (2000) p 346].

### States of Origin

The main sources of children today are China and Russia, but this has changed over time – from the dominance of war-torn defeated countries after WW2 to the long period of dominance of adoption from South Korea after the Korean War and the emergence of Latin America as a major source in the 1980s and Romania for a few years after the fall of Ceausescu (Selman 2002). From the mid 1990s China and Russia are the major suppliers of children, but there are major differences between receiving States – see table 2 below.

**Table 2: Countries sending most children for ICA; 4 receiving States 2004**

USA	SPAIN	Rank Order	FRANCE	ITALY
China	China	1	Haiti	Russia
Russia	Russia	2	China	Ukraine
Guatemala	Ukraine	3	Russia	Colombi a
S Corea	Colombi a	4	Etiopía	Belarus
Kazakhsta n	Ethiopia	5	Vietnam	Brasil
Ukraine	India	6	Colombi a	Poland
22,884	5,541	<Total >	4,079	3,400

Standardisation shows that the highest rates for States of origin in 2003 were in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, closely followed by South Korea and Guatemala – China and India sent large numbers but had very low rates.

**Table 3: Standardised adoption rates and ratios in selected States of Origin 2003**

Country	Number of Adoptions 2003	Rank Order for number of children sent	Adoption Rate per 10,000 under age 5	Adoption Ratio (per 1,000 live births)
Bulgaria	950	9	31.1	15.3
Guatemala	2,656	3	13.7	6.3
Russia	7,632	2	12.5	6.2
Ukraine	1,951	5	9.6	4.8

<b>S Korea</b>	2,306	<b>4</b>	7.9	<b>4.1</b>
<b>Colombia</b>	1,721	<b>6</b>	3.6	<b>1.8</b>
<b>China</b>	11,230	<b>1</b>	1.21	<b>0.60</b>
<b>Vietnam</b>	893	<b>10</b>	1.16	<b>0.54</b>
<b>Ethiopia</b>	787	<b>12</b>	0.63	<b>0.26</b>
<b>India</b>	1,118	<b>7</b>	0.09	<b>0.04</b>

### Gender and Age in International Adoption

Data on gender and age of children is not available for many countries, including Spain and the UK, but data for other states or groupings shows wide variation between countries: China, India and Vietnam send more girls, but Korea sends more boys, girls being preferred by domestic adopters.

**Table 4 International Adoptions by gender of child placed**

Euradopt 2004					France 2004		USA 2002/3		
Femal e	Mal e	%	Female		Mal e	%	Fema le	Mal e	%
<b>China</b>	1,612	96	<b>94.4</b>	482	9	<b>98.2</b>	6,545	314	<b>95.4</b>
<b>India</b>	138	76	<b>64.5</b>	9	4	<b>69.2</b>	336	127	<b>72.6</b>
<b>Vietna m</b>	11	2	<b>84.6</b>	230	133	<b>63.4</b>	382	136	<b>64.4</b>
<b>Russia</b>	30	81	<b>27.0</b>	176	269	<b>39.6</b>	2,052	2,135	<b>49.0</b>
<b>Corea</b>	102	156	<b>39.5</b>	23	50	<b>32.0</b>	759	1028	<b>42.5</b>

There is also much variation in the age of children sent – with Korea restricting adoptions to children under age 3 and Brazil permitting only older or special needs children to be adopted.

**Table 5: International Adoptions by age of child placed (percentages): USA 2002/3; France 2004; EurAdopt 2005**

USA 2002/3					France 2004			EurAdopt 2005	
Unde r 1	1-4	5+	Under 1		1-4	5+	Und er 1	1-4	5+
<b>Korea</b>	<b>94.3</b>	5.1	0.5	<b>97.6</b>	2.4	0	<b>97.3</b>	2.7	0
<b>Vietn am</b>	<b>76.4</b>	17.1	6.6	<b>77.5</b>	22.6	0	<b>75.0</b>	22.4	2.6
<b>China</b>	43.3	<b>54.2</b>	2.5	13.4	<b>86.4</b>	0.2	38.3	<b>60.9</b>	0.8

<b>Thailand</b>	6.0	<b>67.2</b>	26.9	4.6	<b>74.7</b>	20.7	6.2	<b>91.2</b>	2.7
<b>Brazil</b>	3.8	30.7	<b>65.4</b>	2.2	27.2	<b>70.7</b>	2.9	<b>48.6</b>	<b>48.6</b>

### Country Profiles

The final part of the paper will look at the pattern of adoption from different States of origin, including China and Ethiopia (see Tables 5 & 6 below)

**Table 6: Adoptions from China : by number sent 1998-2004**

1998	2000	2001	2002		2003	2004	1998 - 2004
<b>US</b>	4,206	5,053	4,681	5,053	6,859	7,044	<b>36,997</b>
<b>Spain</b>	196	475	941	1,427	1,043	2,389	<b>6,732</b>
<b>Canada</b>	901	604	604	771	1,108	1,001	<b>5,700</b>
<b>Netherlands</b>	210	457	445	510	566	644	<b>3,103</b>
<b>Sweden</b>	123	165	220	316	373	497	<b>1,817</b>
<b>France</b>	23	105	216	210	360	491	<b>1,376</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>6,115</b>	<b>7,438</b>	<b>7,712</b>	<b>9,135</b>	<b>11,203</b>	<b>13,258</b>	<b>60,810</b>

**Table 7: ETHIOPIA 2001- 2005: Countries receiving most children 2004**

2001	2003	2004		Increase 2001-2004	2005
<b>France</b>	234	217	<b>390</b>	66%	397
<b>USA</b>	158	135	<b>289</b>	83%	441
<b>Spain</b>	0	107	<b>220</b>	-	227
<b>Italy</b>	79	47	<b>192</b>	<b>143%</b>	211
<b>Netherlands</b>	25	39	<b>72</b>	<b>188%</b>	50
<b>Belgium</b>	38	52	<b>62</b>	63%	59
<b>TOTAL (17 States)</b>	<b>728</b>	<b>843</b>	<b>1,526</b>	<b>110%</b>	<b>1,535 (13 States)</b>

### Conclusion

The paper will conclude with a consideration of the implications of the data presented.

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